



Administrative Policies and Procedures: 1.21

Subject:	Coordination, Cooperation with Communities, Governmental and Non-Governmental Agencies and Organizations
Authority:	TCA 37-5-106
Standards:	ACA: 3-JTS-1A-10; COA: AM 4; DCS Practice Standards: 2-106B, 2-200; 3-101; 3-500; 3-501
Application:	To All Department of Children's Services Employees

Policy Statement:

The Department of Children's Services shall provide access to services in coordination and cooperation with communities, regional offices, contract providers, institutions of higher learning and other agencies, organizations and branches of government promoting child welfare and juvenile justice programs. DCS shall solicit participation, involvement, resources, and referral linkages from ethnic and community-based providers for cultural and linguistic services, in a coordinated effort to improve programs, services, activities and operations provided to children and families within the State of Tennessee.

Purpose:

The coordination and cooperation with community partners and other entities in the delivery of services to clients and families contribute to meeting the service needs, reducing barriers to services use within the service delivery system and promoting positive outcomes for children and families.

Procedures:

A. Cooperation with communities	<p>Each DCS regional/field/facilities and central office shall:</p> <ol style="list-style-type: none">1. Actively solicit the involvement of community organizations and involvement from diverse community representatives concerning service delivery design and execution, including planning, policy-making, operations, evaluation, training and service provisions.2. Efficiently use its resources to improve the quality of life and service delivery to the children and families that it serves by interacting with the local communities.3. Participate in cooperative ventures with community agencies and organizations including joint planning and program development, technical assistance, work projects, research projects, internships, child and family services review, Title IV-E and IV-B Plans, and other projects and programs of mutual benefit.4. Coordinate activities to avoid overlap and duplication of services and to enhance the quality of services of both the community agencies and
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	<p>organizations.</p> <ol style="list-style-type: none"> Utilize community advisory committees, volunteer advisory boards or citizen involvement councils in the coordination effort. Utilize community-based providers and resources for cultural and linguistic services.
B. Regional offices, and contract providers	DCS will work collaboratively with Regional Offices and contract service providers in developing a seamless system of care that is flexible, diverse and responsive to the needs of children and families.
C. Cooperation with institutions of higher learning	<p>Collaboration with local colleges, universities and technology centers may include, but not be limited to:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ♦ Program evaluations of region/field/facility operations; ♦ Internships and practicums by qualified students; ♦ Research by university and college students and faculty; ♦ Specialized consultation, training and technical assistance to the region/field/facility by college and university personnel; ♦ Teaching and other activities by DCS region/field/facility personnel at colleges and universities; ♦ Joint program and policy planning and development; and ♦ Efforts to recruit and retain career DCS employees through educational programs designed to enhance the skills and capabilities of such employees.
D. Collaboration and community relations with governmental and institutional partners	DCS will collaborate with governmental and community stakeholders to develop strategies for improving cross-system components and overall functioning of the child welfare and juvenile justice systems and improving outcomes for children and families.
E. Research initiatives	<ol style="list-style-type: none"> DCS shall support and cooperatively engage in research initiatives that contribute to the establishment of future goals and objectives or that contribute to more effective, efficient and economical departmental operation or services delivery. Research projects must be approved and conducted in accordance to DCS policy <u>1.33, Research Proposals</u>.

F. Public awareness, review and inspection	<ol style="list-style-type: none">1. DCS shall strive to increase public awareness of its guiding principles and professional practice standards in order to promote the general welfare of children and their families and to encourage collaboration within the communities.2. DCS shall make available for public review and inspection the plans and plan amendments for Title IV-E and Title IV-B.3. DCS shall make available for public review and inspection all statewide assessments, report of findings, and program improvement plans developed as a result of a full or partial child and family services review.

Forms:	None
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Collateral documents:	<i>None</i>
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